

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 10 with the following revised paragraph:

In order to solve the problems described above, ~~PCT International~~ Japanese Patent Publication (Kohyo) No. 8-508199 teaches a filter 8 in which partitioning walls 81 are deformed so as to block one end of the cell 82, as shown in FIG. 3.

Please replace the paragraph appearing at page 2, line 31 – page 3, line 4 with the following revised paragraph:

A deformation method is also disclosed in the above-cited ~~PCT~~ Kohyo No. 8-508199, in which the end portion of the partitioning wall 81 is subjected to a soaking process in order to bring it to an easily deformable state and, then, the partitioning wall 81 is pressed and deformed into the desired shape. Specifically, the end portion of the partitioning wall 81 is immersed in a soaking liquid such as water, a water and ethanol, a mixture water and oil emulsion, or the like, for 2 to 10 minutes, for example, followed by deforming the end portion.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 13 with the following revised paragraph:

In the subsequent tapered plug formation step, first, as shown in FIG. 4, a ceramic material 101 as the molding material is extruded from the slits 21 of the molding die 2. During extrusion, a honeycomb-like molded article 10 having a plurality of cells 12 separated by partitions 11 is shaped, while the front end 102 of the molded article 10 is introduced into the tapered jig 3. Then, as shown in FIG. 5, the front end portion 13 of the partitions 11 is deflected along the plurality of tapered molding surfaces 31 in the tapered ~~jig 2~~ jig 3 to form a plurality of tapered plugs 15 having small openings 14 are formed. The small openings 14 are produced by reducing a size of the opening of the cells 12.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 14, line 32 with the following revised paragraph:

Thereafter, in the plug fitting step, the resulting honeycomb-like molded article 10 is dried and fired, and then plug members 171 and 172 are fitted, respectively, to the small opening 14 formed by the tapered plug 15 and to the opposite opening 140 of the adjacent cell 12 in which a large opening ~~160~~ 16 has been formed.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 16 with the following revised paragraph:

For this purpose, in the tapered plug formation step (FIG. 5), after the tapered plugs 15 are formed, the tapered jig 5 is separated from the tapered plug 15. Other conditions ~~and others~~ in this example are the same as those of Example 1.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 36 with the following revised paragraph:

Other conditions ~~and others~~ in this example are the same as those of Example 1.